

C.I.A. Oil Study Upheld

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WASHINGTON, May 21—The Carter Administration did not manipulate Central Intelligence Agency predictions on Soviet oil production, a Senate staff report said today. But the report criticized the agency for poor presentation of its findings.

In a 25-page analysis, the staff of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence said it opened an investigation of how the C.I.A. prepared its predictions of Soviet oil production after other energy research groups and the press criticized the findings.

Among the charges about the C.I.A. estimates was that the agency's conclusions may have been influenced by President Carter's desire to persuade the American public of the growing shortage of oil supplies in the world.

No Evidence of Compromise

"The committee staff could find no evidence that the integrity and independence of the analytical process, in the case of the prediction about Soviet oil production in the 1980's, was compromised in any way," the report said.

But the report said there were "political motivations" behind the release of the C.I.A. research, and that attention was drawn to the C.I.A.'s role by the President himself.

At issue are two reports, "The International Energy Situation: Outlook for 1985" and "Prospects for Soviet Oil Production," which were made public last April following Mr. Carter's appeal for energy conservation during a "fire-side chat" television speech on April 18.

The thrust of both reports was that previous predictions about Soviet oil production were too optimistic and that new data indicated the Soviets would produce less oil by the mid-1980's and would ultimately have to import oil from the world market, thus affecting supplies and consumption in other industrialized nations.

One report estimated "that the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe will require a minimum of 3.5 million barrels a day of imported oil by 1985. At worst, slumping production could lead to import requirements as large as 4.5 million barrels a day."

Changes Would Be Made

These findings, particularly the barrel per day figures, received a hail of criticism from other energy research agencies and in the press.

The report said that C.I.A. officials told committee members that if they had the chance to rewrite that particular study "they would definitely change that sentence" because it leads to "misinterpretation." The report noted that the C.I.A. meant to say that if the Soviet Union did not reduce its energy consumption and increase its conservation practices, the result would be the need for importation.

"No one in the O.E.R. (C.I.A.'s Office of Energy Research) believes the Soviet Union will import oil at that magnitude," the Senate report said.

The Senate committee report urged that the C.I.A.'s reports on the subject continue to be made public, but that care be taken to ensure that "integrity of the analytical process."

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